

From: Mark Wade mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Fwd: Book removal
Date: August 18, 2023 at 5:00 PM
To: bquilligan@gmail.com
Cc: Laura Weddle laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us



Ms. Quilligan,

Thank you for reaching out to board members about your concern. Here is some information about the issues at hand. The administration met with legal counsel soon after SB 150 was passed to discuss the law's implementation and was advised by counsel of actions to take. We follow the law to the best of our ability. District librarians were **ONLY** asked to remove any materials that directly violated SB 150, but some books were removed that should not have been removed. We are in the process of reconsideration of these materials. If you feel that something was removed that shouldn't have been removed, I ask that you contact the building principal for reconsideration of that item. I appreciate your patience as we work through these issues and gain more clarity on this bill.

Sincerely,
Mark Wade

From: Betsy Quilligan <bquilligan@gmail.com>
Date: August 17, 2023 at 11:14:03 AM EDT
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us, jennifer.newby@boyle.kyschools.us, jesse.johnson@boyle.kyschools.us, ruthann.elliott@boyle.kyschools.us, stephen.tamme@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Book removal

Dear Boyle County School Board,

As a graduate of Boyle County Schools, I write to express horror at the recent removal of books from Boyle County School libraries, particularly at the high school. The district's reputation for excellence is not supported by action to proactively limit resources to children.

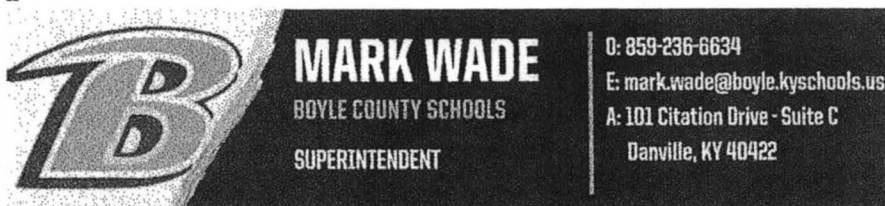
I understand hundreds of books have been removed from the district libraries. Regular clean-up of shelves should be a routine matter. However, many of the books removed have been recent acquisitions, and there is a clear trend in the subject matter being intentionally purged. Further, it is clear to me that some of the books have only tangential reference to topics covered by SB 150.

Respectfully, I request that the School Board reconsider the district's approach on this matter and continue its long commitment to providing high-quality education to Boyle County children.

Thank you for your service to our schools and children. I look forward to hearing more about the district's approach to these issues.

Sincerely,
Betsy Quilligan
BCHS 1998

Betsy Quilligan, MPP, CPD(DONA)
she/her/hers
202-276-2334



From: Ddel Damanidel@gmail.com
Subject: Board meeting request
Date: August 17, 2023 at 12:36 PM
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us



We, the Del Rosario family are asking the district to reconsider its decision to remove books from school libraries, as this action is not called for in the law itself, nor has there been any direction from KDE to undertake such a drastic step. I believe and trust the Boyle County Schools have been working hard to cultivate a reputation for excellence. Which is exactly why our family decided to send our children there. Gaining a reputation for book banning undermines these efforts.

Thank you, kindly

From: Laura Weddle laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Fwd: Board meeting request
Date: August 17, 2023 at 6:58 PM
To: Mark Wade mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us



Laura Weddle

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ddel <damanidel@gmail.com>
Date: August 17, 2023 at 12:36:20 PM EDT
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Board meeting request

We, the Del Rosario family are asking the district to reconsider its decision to remove books from school libraries, as this action is not called for in the law itself, nor has there been any direction from KDE to undertake such a drastic step. I believe and trust the Boyle County Schools have been working hard to cultivate a reputation for excellence. Which is exactly why our family decided to send our children there. Gaining a reputation for book banning undermines these efforts.

Thank you, kindly

From: Mark Wade mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Fwd: Board meeting request
Date: August 18, 2023 at 5:02 PM
To: damanidel@gmail.com
Cc: Laura Weddle laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us



Del Rosario Family,

Thank you for reaching out to board members about your concern. Here is some information about the issues at hand. The administration met with legal counsel soon after SB 150 was passed to discuss the law's implementation and was advised by counsel of actions to take. We follow the law to the best of our ability. District librarians were **ONLY** asked to remove any materials that directly violated SB 150, but some books were removed that should not have been removed. We are in the process of reconsideration of these materials. If you feel that something was removed that shouldn't have been removed, I ask that you contact the building principal for reconsideration of that item. I appreciate your patience as we work through these issues and gain more clarity on this bill.

Sincerely,
Mark Wade

From: Ddel <damanidel@gmail.com>
Date: August 17, 2023 at 12:36:20 PM EDT
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Board meeting request

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Thank you, kindly



MARK WADE
BOYLE COUNTY SCHOOLS
SUPERINTENDENT

O: 859-236-6634
E: mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us
A: 101 Citation Drive - Suite C
Danville, KY 40422

From: Ddel Damanidel@gmail.com
Subject: Re: Board meeting request
Date: August 18, 2023 at 6:01 PM
To: Mark Wade mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us



Thank you for your time and effort!

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 18, 2023, at 5:02 PM, Mark Wade <mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us> wrote:

Del Rosario Family,

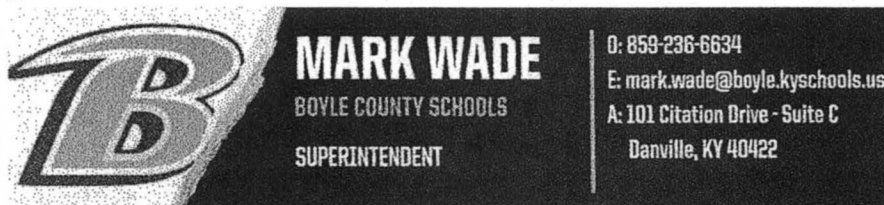
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Thank you, kindly



From: MB Touchstone mbtouchstone@gmail.com
Subject: Reading is Essential
Date: August 15, 2023 at 12:54 PM
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us

MT

Ms. Weddel,

Thank you so much for serving on Boyle County's Board of Education. I appreciate that in this day and age, the post can be challenging. I can also appreciate how difficult it must be for any board member to be asked to adopt policies that will be harmful to some students. As the parent of a transgendered adult and an active member of this community, I must ask that you keep our marginalized children in mind as you implement policies particularly regarding access to school and classroom libraries.

Since SB 150 does not call for removal of library books, I implore you not to do so. Just say "no". I am the mother of 3 and grandmother of 5; I know it is very difficult to get some children to read. I believe reading is the gateway to learning and we just don't know which book will trigger a lifelong love of reading for a child. Will it be the picture book depicting a child with 2 mommies or a book about the world's greatest sculptures? Let's not limit opportunities for our children to learn.

I am so proud of the quality of education that has been provided by the Boyle County schools. Let's not falter now. Please reconsider your decision to decommission books in our schools.

Warmest regards,
Mary Beth Touchstone

From: Laura Weddle laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Fwd: Reading is Essential
Date: August 17, 2023 at 7:00 PM
To: Mark Wade mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us

LW

Laura Weddle

Begin forwarded message:

From: MB Touchstone <mbtouchstone@gmail.com>
Date: August 15, 2023 at 12:54:09 PM EDT
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Reading is Essential

Ms. Weddel,

Thank you so much for serving on Boyle County's Board of Education. I appreciate that in this day and age, the post can be challenging. I can also appreciate how difficult it must be for any board member to be asked to adopt policies that will be harmful to some students. As the parent of a transgendered adult and an active member of this community, I must ask that you keep our marginalized children in mind as you implement policies particularly regarding access to school and classroom libraries.

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Warmest regards,
Mary Beth Touchstone

From: Mark Wade mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Fwd: Reading is Essential
Date: August 18, 2023 at 4:47 PM
To: mbtouchstone@gmail.com
Cc: Laura Weddle laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us



Ms. Touchstone,

Thank you for reaching out to Ms. Weddle about your concern. Here is some information about the issues at hand. The administration met with legal counsel soon after SB 150 was passed to discuss the law's implementation and was advised by counsel of actions to take. We follow the law to the best of our ability. District librarians were **ONLY** asked to remove any materials that directly violated SB 150, but some books were removed that should not have been removed. We are in the process of reconsideration of these materials. If you feel that something was removed that shouldn't have been removed, I ask that you contact the building principal for reconsideration of that item. I appreciate your patience as we work through these issues and gain more clarity on this bill.

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Mark Wade

From: MB Touchstone <mbtouchstone@gmail.com>
Date: August 15, 2023 at 12:54:09 PM EDT
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us
Subject: Reading is Essential

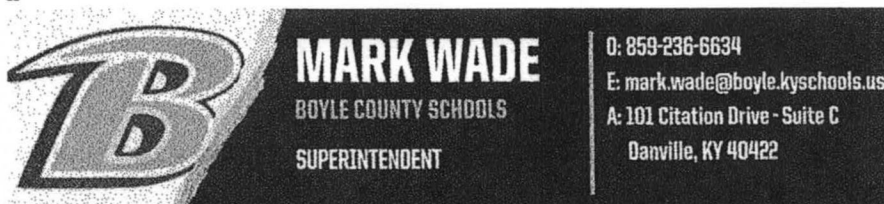
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Warmest regards,
Mary Beth Touchstone



From: MB Touchstone mbtouchstone@gmail.com
Subject: RE: Reading is Essential
Date: August 20, 2023 at 1:03 PM
To: Mark Wade mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us
Cc: Laura Weddle laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us



Mr. Wade,

Thank you for your response. It is my understanding that SP 150 does not require school districts to decommission books. I am hopeful that you and the board will reconsider this decision. Given the ramifications of book banning in our community, perhaps a second look by different counsel is warranted.

Again, I appreciate the efforts that you and the board undertake daily to ensure a quality education for our children.

Warmest regards,
Mary Beth Touchstone

From: Mark Wade <mark.wade@boyle.kyschools.us>
Sent: Friday, August 18, 2023 4:47 PM
To: mbtouchstone@gmail.com
Cc: Laura Weddle <laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us>
Subject: Fwd: Reading is Essential

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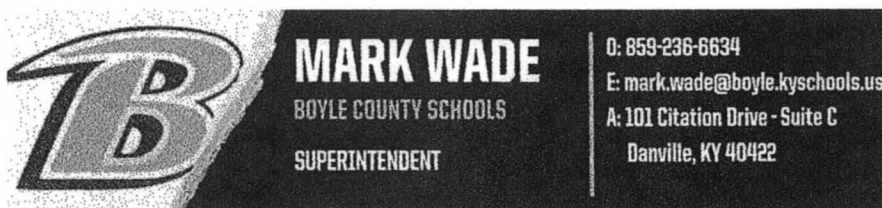
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Warmest regards,
Mary Beth Touchstone



From: Ballotpedia updates@info.ballotpedia.org
Subject: Hall Pass: Your Ticket to Understanding School Board Politics, Edition #75
Date: August 30, 2023 at 4:34 PM
To: laura.weddle@boyle.kyschools.us

B

[View in Browser](#)



Ballotpedia's Hall Pass

Keeping you up to date on school board politics and education policy

Welcome to Hall Pass

August 30, 2023

Welcome to *Hall Pass*, a newsletter written to keep you plugged into the conversations driving school board politics and governance.

In today's edition, you'll find:

- On the issues: The debate over universal government-funded school meals
- School board filing deadlines, election results, and recall certifications
- Oklahoma State Board of Education votes to upgrade Tulsa Public Schools' accreditation status following superintendent resignation
- Stay up to date with responses to trends in curriculum development
- Extracurricular: education news from around the web
- Candidate Connection survey
- School board candidates per seat up for election

Share story ideas or reactions by replying to this email.

BALLOTPEDIA

SHARE THIS NEWSLETTER



On the issues: The debate over universal government-funded school meals

In this section, we curate reporting, analysis, and commentary on the issues school board members deliberate when they set out to offer the best education possible in their district.

Eligibility for government-funded free or reduced-price school meals is typically tied to family income, with students from low-income families receiving the most generous subsidies. But should *all* students have access to government-funded meals?

Allison Pfaff Harris writes in the affirmative. Harris says expanding eligibility would reduce administrative costs associated with processing applications from families seeking school meal assistance. She also says applications create barriers that prevent some children from receiving needed food.

Max Eden writes that government-funded lunches should not be universally available. Eden says it is better for parents to feed their children if they are able and that universal school meals would stigmatize the practice of packing lunch. He also says government-funded meals train children to rely on the government.

Barrier to free school meals hurts students | Allison Pfaff Harris, *The Cap Times*

“A requirement for participation is providing all households the opportunity to fill out a free and reduced price meal application. Students from households with incomes below certain thresholds receive school meals either for free or at a reduced price. This requires school nutrition professionals to prioritize the free and reduced meal application to first ensure all students have access to meals, in itself a time-consuming and emotionally draining task. From addressing questions and comprehension barriers to convincing a household that their income information would remain confidential because the household was too proud or concerned that others in their community would know they were struggling financially — a storyline I heard all too often throughout the state — the application creates a barrier for students in achieving their full potential. And not simply their academic potential while in K-12 school, but throughout life. Access to nourishing school meals during the school day means improved focus in the classroom, ensuring the door for

the school day means improved focus in the classroom, opening the door for future employment, educational, and professional opportunities, and nurturing healthy family, social and community relationships.”

The Case Against Universal Free Lunch | Max Eden, *American Enterprise Institute*

“There is a strong case for governmental provision of food to children whose parents can’t—or won’t—feed them. But that’s not the question at hand. The question is whether the government should feed children whose parents can provide them with the food they need. ... Parents have a primal drive to provide food for their children. But parents are also sensitive and responsive to the social pressures their children face. Kids apply stigma to behaviors that go against norms. Universal free lunch would all but certainly engender a stigma against kids bringing brown lunch bags, crowding out parental food preparation. Would this really be good for parents? Or for children? ... Any child naturally inclined to gratitude in the act of eating would not be reflecting on how the love and labor of their parents, working as units within society, brought that food to their plate. Rather, they must contemplate the state as provider. Such reflection must necessarily inform and transform a child’s moral worldview, with human consequences that will evade econometric analysis. ... Beyond the taxpayer sticker shock, we should far more carefully consider the moral, social, and potentially biological costs of universal free school lunch.

Share candidate endorsements with us!

As part of our goal to solve the [ballot information problem](#), Ballotpedia is gathering information about school board candidate endorsements. The ballot information gap widens the further down the ballot you go, and is worst for the more than 500,000 local offices nationwide, such as school boards or special districts. Endorsements can help voters know more about their candidates and what they stand for.

Do you know of an individual or group that has endorsed a candidate in your district?

Click [here](#) to respond!

School board update: filing deadlines, election results, and recall certifications

Ballotpedia has historically covered school board elections in about 500 of the country's largest districts. We're gradually expanding the number we cover with our eye on the more than 13,000 districts with elected school boards.

Election results from the past week

Idaho

On Aug. 29, residents of the West Bonner County School District voted to recall two school board members—Zone 4 Representative Keith Rutledge and Zone 2 Representative Susan Brown. Rutledge served as the board's chairman and Brown served as vice chairman.

Unofficial results from the Bonner County Elections Department showed a 63-37% majority voted in favor of recalling Rutledge, and a 66-34% majority voted in favor of recalling Brown. A majority of voters had to cast ballots in favor of each recall for them to be successful.

Recall supporters initiated the effort after the board voted 3-1 to reject an English Language Arts curriculum it had previously endorsed because of concerns about social-emotional learning.

So far this year, we've tracked 219 recall efforts against 325 officials. The efforts against 37 of those officials appeared on the ballot, and 28 were removed from office in recall elections. Recall elections against another 31 officials are scheduled to occur later this year.

We'll have more on this recall in next week's edition.

Upcoming school board elections

New Hampshire

Fourteen seats on the Manchester School District school board in New Hampshire are up for election this year, with a primary scheduled for **Sept. 19**. The general election is scheduled for Nov. 7. We'll bring you more about these elections in a future issue.

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November elections

Nov. 7 is the biggest election date of the year, and voters across the country will decide state and local races—including for school boards (subscribe to our [Daily Brew](#) newsletter for Ballotpedia's coverage and analysis of elections up and down the ballot). Throughout the fall, we'll preview the most interesting and pivotal school board elections happening that day. Let's step back and take a look at the big picture.

We're covering school board elections in the following **16** states on Nov. 7:

School board elections on Nov. 7, 2023

This table shows the 16 states where Ballotpedia is covering school board elections on Nov. 7, 2023, and associated upcoming filing deadlines. Dates shaded in blue are upcoming.

State	Filing deadline
Colorado	September 1
Idaho	September 8
Iowa	September 21
Kansas	June 1
Kentucky	June 6
Minnesota	August 15
Mississippi	September 6
New Hampshire	July 21
New Jersey	July 31
New Mexico	August 29
North Carolina	July 21
Ohio	August 9
Pennsylvania	August 1
Texas	August 21
Virginia	June 13
Washington	May 19

In seven of those states—Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington—we are covering *all* school board elections on Nov. 7. We'll be bringing you detailed coverage of those elections.

Oklahoma State Board of Education votes to upgrade Tulsa Public Schools' accreditation status following superintendent resignation

On Aug. 24, days after Tulsa Public Schools Superintendent Dr. Deborah Gist announced she would step down from her role, the [Oklahoma State Board of Education](#) voted unanimously to upgrade Tulsa Public Schools' accreditation status to "accredited with deficiencies"—temporarily ending a months-long conflict between the state and Oklahoma's [largest school district](#).

The [six-member board](#) [said](#) Tulsa Public Schools has three deficiencies: the submission of untimely reports, a lack of financial transparency, and violating state financial accounting standards. The board comprises Superintendent of Public Instruction [Ryan Walters](#) (R) and five members appointed by the governor with the consent of the state Senate.

Since taking office in January, Walters has criticized Tulsa Public Schools for [low academic performance](#) and [financial mismanagement](#).

State Department of Education General Counsel Bryan Cleveland [said](#) Tulsa Public Schools "has been risking misuse of its finances through a lack of internal controls." The district is [pursuing litigation](#) against its former chief talent and equity officer for allegedly embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars between 2018 and 2021. Gist [said](#) "a single late accreditation report and an isolated, self-reported embezzlement incident should not cause the Tulsa Public Schools Board of Education to lose local control over the future of our school district."

Gist, who became superintendent in 2015, said the district was making progress on student achievement. Gist [announced](#) her resignation on Aug. 22, [writing](#) "it is no secret that our state superintendent has had an unrelenting focus on our district and specifically on me, and I am confident that my departure will help to keep our democratically-elected leadership

and our team in charge of our schools–this week and in the future. So I’m stepping away.”

Gist said her last day would be Sept. 15. The Tulsa Public Schools Board of Education appointed the district’s chief learning officer as interim superintendent.

Walters said, “I am optimistic that this is a step in the right direction. I’ve been crystal clear that Tulsa Public Schools needs a dramatic change in leadership.”

In July 2022, the board voted 4-2 to reduce the district’s accreditation status to “accredited with warning” for violating HB 1775. HB 1775, enacted in 2021, prohibits teachers, administrators, and other school staff from teaching ideas that include “an individual, by virtue of his or her race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously.” The incident stemmed from a teacher’s complaint that mandatory staff training material contained “statements that specifically shame white people for past offenses in history, and state that all are implicitly racially biased by nature.”

The state board reviews the accreditation status of all districts on an annual basis. That happened for most districts at the board’s July 27 meeting. However, Walters said he wanted to take an additional look at two districts, including Tulsa Public Schools.

Although the district’s accreditation status improved following the Aug. 24 vote, it must provide monthly in-person reports to the state board detailing its progress in correcting the deficiencies. Walters said, “Tulsa has been given an opportunity to correct themselves. And to be very clear, I will not let this district fail. If they do not fix these problems, I will. The clock is started. There will be accountability.”

Walters said he would revisit the district’s accreditation status if he didn’t see progress within three to four months.

Walters first mentioned reviewing the district’s accreditation status at a rally in support of Tulsa Public Schools board member E’Lena Ashley, who faced criticism from other members of the board after leading a prayer during a high school graduation ceremony. Walters said, “At the next board meeting we have next month, we will be looking at Tulsa Public Schools’ accreditation for all their violations, fiscal mismanagement in this district, and we are going to make sure that religious liberties are protected in Tulsa Public Schools.”

In response to the accreditation vote, Gov. [Kevin Stitt](#) (R) said, “The things that they asked for are very reasonable, and I was excited the state board voted on those and I think it’s the right thing to do. Now it’s up to the local community and up to the school board and the Tulsa community to improve on their district and so that’s exactly how it should work.”

State Rep. [Monroe Nichols](#) (D), whose district includes parts of Tulsa, [said](#), “I don’t know his heart or the hearts of the board members, but I know they have over and over focused on the issue of race, and they just now happen to be threatening to ‘unaccredit’ the school district that educates the most Black kids in the state. There are several other districts whose outcomes are worse than TPS’, and none of them are facing the same consequences.”

Tulsa Public Schools has [a student population of around 34,000](#).

Stay up to date with responses to trends in curriculum development

In addition to covering school board [elections](#) and [endorsements](#), we’re also documenting how individuals and groups are responding to some of the biggest education controversies of the day—including the debates over K-12 curriculum.

Approaches to K-12 curriculum development in public schools vary across states and school districts. State officials, local districts, school leaders, or teachers may each play a role in shaping what students read and learn.

State-level content standards—educational learning and achievement goals that state education officials either require or recommend—may also influence curriculum development.

Our article on responses to trends in curriculum development includes stories in the following areas:

- [Critical race theory \(CRT\) and CRT-adjacent issues](#)
- [Changes to history, civics, and social science curricula](#)
- [Changes to environmental and climate science curricula](#)
- [Textbooks and model curricula](#)
- [Removal of books from school libraries](#)
- [Access to instructional materials](#)

- Access to instructional materials
- Sex education and gender policies

For example, here are some recent stories we've covered on CRT and CRT-related issues:

- **Tennessee teacher group sues state over law governing instruction on social issues:** The Tennessee Education Association filed a lawsuit on July 25 in the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Tennessee challenging a 2021 state law that prohibits teaching "certain concepts about racism, sexism, bias, and other social issues."
- **Nebraska senator announces hearing date to study the use of CRT in public schools:** Nebraska state Sen. Dave Murman (R), chairman of the Nebraska Legislature's Education Committee, announced the committee would hear testimony on July 31, from Nebraska Department of Education officials, educators, and parents. The hearing was scheduled after the passage of three interim study resolutions (which Murman introduced in May) through which the legislature resolved to study the usage of CRT, social and emotional learning, parental involvement, access to educational materials, and other related issues in public schools.

Here is a recent story on sex education and gender policies:

- **North Carolina lawmakers override governor's veto on bill banning some sexual education:** The North Carolina Legislature voted to override Gov. Roy Cooper's (D) veto of Senate Bill 49 on Aug. 18. The bill prohibits curriculum on "gender identity, sexual activity, or sexuality" in elementary schools. The bill also requires parental notification before "any changes in the name or pronoun used for a student."

And here is a recent story on history, civics, and social science curricula:

- **Arkansas Department of Education removes AP African American studies course:** On Aug. 11, the Arkansas Department of Education removed the AP African American studies course from schools for the 2023-2024 school year, saying the pilot course may not align with state law. According to *Education Week*, the state department said it "cannot approve a pilot that may unintentionally put a teacher at risk of violating Arkansas law." The College Board introduced the curriculum in 60 schools during the 2022-2023 school year and was set to expand to more schools nationwide in the 2023-2024 school year, including six schools in Arkansas. Florida was the first state to ban the curriculum in January 2023.

Click [here](#) to read more about responses to trends in curriculum development.

Extracurricular: education news from around the web

This section contains links to recent education-related articles from around the internet. If you know of a story we should be reading, reply to this email to share it with us!

- [A school closure cliff is coming. Black and Hispanic students are likely to bear the brunt](#) | *The Hechinger Report*
- [NYC school bus strike looms ahead of new year. What families should know.](#) | *Chalkbeat New York*
- [Four Reasons to Be Hopeful from Latest Summer School Study](#) | *The 74*
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Everyone deserves to know their candidates. However, we know it can be hard for voters to find information about their candidates, especially for local offices such as school boards. That's why we created **Candidate Connection**—a survey designed to help candidates tell voters about their campaigns, their issues, and so much more.

If you're a school board candidate or incumbent, click [here to take the](#)

survey. And if you're not running for school board, but there is an election in your community this year, share the link with the candidates and urge them to take the survey!

The survey contains over 30 questions, and you can choose the ones you feel will best represent your views to voters. **If you complete the survey, a box with your answers will display on your Ballotpedia profile.** Your responses will also appear in our sample ballot.

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